



ECH004 – WATER SAFETY POLICY

POLICY CONTEXT

Willunga Waldorf School is a co-educational and gender-inclusive school. The school's mission is to provide Steiner education from early childhood to year 12, based on the work of Rudolf Steiner. This education is driven by a deep understanding and respect for the developing and unfolding human being.

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for managing water safety, including safety during any water-based activities.

According to KidSafe (the recognised authority on the prevention of injuries in children), drowning continues to be one of the main causes of fatalities of Australian children. Every year a number of children drown or were in near drowning situations. Non-fatal drowning incidents are also of great concern as they can have potential long-term effects, including brain damage and permanent disability.

The most common factor in childhood drowning is a lack of supervision. A child can drown in as little as a few centimetres of water. A water hazard or water feature may include ponds, water fountains, large drains or any areas that retain water.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this document is to outline Willunga Waldorf School's policy and principles of practice in relation to water safety in the Kindergarten.

It applies to all Kindergarten and Reception staff (including volunteers and contractors), children and families at all times.

POLICY STATEMENT

Willunga Waldorf Kindergarten values water play for the vast amounts of play and sensory experiences it can provide to young children. We commit to providing safe water play for children and to supporting children's learning in a safe environment at all times. Children's safety and wellbeing will be protected in and around water through supervision and education.

PRINCIPLES OF PRACTICE

- Children always have access to water when they are outside.
- The children are supervised at all times when they are playing with water.
- The WWS Kindergarten neither goes on swimming excursions, nor does the School have swimming facilities on its grounds.
- The children have free access to water at two outside taps. They can gather water from these taps using watering cans, small buckets and pots and pans. There are two water collection bowls under each tap. Children are encouraged to recycle the water collected in these bowls. Children are encouraged to turn the taps on gently and use only as much water as they need.
- In term 1 and term 4 the water feature (known as the Wishing Well and the Crystal Creek) is turned on during outside playtime. Staff manage the flow rate by using a tap and key. Children are encouraged to only use their hands to have gentle play at



the Wishing Well part. Children are permitted to walk barefoot in the Crystal Creek part and the sandpit during hot weather, otherwise children are encouraged to wear gumboots for play in the Crystal Creek. Big messy play is encouraged to happen at the lower part of the Crystal Creek.

- At the end of afternoon outside playtime, the Wishing Well is emptied.
- As part of the end of day pack-up by staff, the water collection bowls under the two outside taps are emptied.
- Regular risk assessments around outside play spaces, including water features, are carried out. The School also keeps a risk register that includes water safety and regularly reviews existing controls to mitigate any risks of water-based accidents/incidents or hazards.

STAFF INDUCTION AND ONGOING TRAINING

- All Kindergarten staff are trained in providing first aid and are required to keep their training current.
- Water safety is discussed regularly at Faculty Meetings.
- Induction of new Kindergarten staff includes making them aware of all water features and this policy.

POLICY ACCESS

Hard copies of policies are available to staff in the kindy office. Electronic copies of policies are available on the SchoolStream parent and staff apps. Hard copies of policies can be made available to parents upon request. Families will be notified by email at least 14 days beforehand of any changes.

RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES, DOCUMENTS AND LEGISLATION

Related School Policies, Procedures and Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HS001 – Child Safe Environment Policy • HS015 – Administration of First Aid • EM001 – Critical Incident Management • ECH007 – Excursion Policy • WHS002 – Incident, Hazard and Near Miss Reporting Policy
Related Legislation and Regulatory Requirements	<p>National Quality Standards (NQS):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QA 2: Children’s Health and Safety: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2.2.1 Supervision. At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm or hazard. • QA 3: Physical Environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 3.2.1 Inclusive environment. Outdoor and indoor spaces are organized and adapted to support every child’s participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments. • QA 7: Governance and Leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ QA7.1.2 Management systems. Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service. <p>Education and Early Childhood Services (Registrations and Standards) Act 2011;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 165 Offence to inadequately supervise children • Section 167 Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards <p>Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulation 101 Conduct of risk assessment for excursions • Regulation 115 Premises designed for supervision • Regulation 168(2)(a)(iii) Education and care services must have policies and procedures on water safety, including safety during any water-based activities • Regulation 170 Policies and procedures to be followed • Regulation 171 Policies and procedures to be kept available • Regulation 172 Notification of change to policies or procedures



Source Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/s1-2011-0653 • Education and Early Childhood Services (Registrations and Standards) Act 2011; https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/_/legislation/lz/c/a/education%20and%20early%20childhood%20services%20(registration%20and%20standards)%20act%202011/current/2011.46.auth.pdf • Early Years Learning Framework https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-01/EYLF-2022-V2.0.pdf • National Quality Standard https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard • Guide to the National Quality Framework https://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/guide-nqf
Cross sector Guidelines (SA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHS – National Principles for Child Safe Organisations • Protective Practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people

VARIATION AND REVIEW

The School reserves the right to vary, replace or terminate this policy from time to time. Unless altered earlier, this policy will be reviewed every three (3) years.

Responsible Person	Early Childhood Faculty Leader
Policy Approver	Head of School
Version	1.1
Initial Documentation	25/03/2015 (version 1.0) – effective 2 nd June 2025.
Last Review Date	May 2025
Next Review Date	May 2028
Revision Record	<p>25/08/2021 (Irene Bragg):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Added " includes homegrown" <p>10/06/2022 (Rachel Ashford):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Updated National Quality Standards to 2018 version <p>June 2024 – May 2025 (Antje Guenther and Rachel Ashford):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reformatted document - Added Policy Context, Purpose and Scope - Expanded Policy Statement - Renamed "Procedures" to "Principles of Practice" and expanded upon existing content - Added Staff Induction & Training and Policy Access sections - Updated Regulatory Requirements to include references to the Act and the national regulations